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PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION REPORT



IMPROVEMENTS TO ROUTE 1A
NORTH VIETNAM

Declass Review by NIMA/DOD

NPIC/R-88/69

OCTOBER 1969

GROUP 1: EXCLUDED FROM
AUTOMATIC DOWNGRADING
AND DECLASSIFICATION

W A R N I N G

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SUMMARY

The North Vietnamese are repairing Route 1A from Vinh to the area just south of Dong Hoi, with the major effort directed at improving the major river crossings. During the bombing period, the North Vietnamese were forced to resort to the use of ferries, ponton bridges, and a combination of both to maintain the serviceability of these crossings. Service on crossings of this type can be interrupted by adverse weather conditions, river traffic, and shortages of maintenance personnel; therefore, the North Vietnamese are improving several of these crossings by installing one-lane wooden-decked bridges supported by wooden pilings. The original bridge structures at these river crossings have been destroyed and no attempts to repair them have been observed. It should be noted that the bridges presently being constructed are of a semipermanent nature. However, while they are structurally more sound and efficient than the type used during the bombing, they are not to be compared with the concrete abutted, steel-truss original bridges which have been destroyed.

BASIC DESCRIPTION

Route 1A Serviceability

There are 107 river or stream crossings observed on Route 1A between Vinh and the Dong Hoi area. Twelve of these are considered major crossings; seven involve bridging, and five utilize highway ferries. Of the seven crossings involving bridging, three are under construction, two have been improved and are in operation, and two are unimproved (Figure 1, Table 1). The remaining 95 crossings are at smaller rivers and streams and utilize a culvert/causeway.

The heaviest concentration of construction activity has been observed between Vinh and Tho Hgoa, 8.5 nautical miles (nm) south of Ha Tinh. This segment of Route 1A contains six of the 12 major crossings, including the Vinh Highway Ferry, as well as two of the areas of road improvement observed. The Tho Son crossing, under construction in (Figure 2), was observed complete, except for some decking and improved approaches, in late . At Xom Gia, 2.5 nm to the south, a pile driver had begun preliminary construction work in late (Figure 3) and work has continued through . Tho Son and Xom Gia are examples of the construction techniques used for the newer bridges and also reflect the difficulties encountered with the combination ferry and ponton bridge crossing. At these crossings, traffic must drive down the river bank and through water before getting onto the bridge.

There are two crossings at Ha Tinh; one is 2 nm north of the city and the other is 1.5 nm south. The northern crossing is under construction. The southern crossing (Figure 4) and the one at Tho Ngoa farther south are the two points where the crossing has been improved and is in operation. This segment of Route 1A between Vinh and Ha Tinh is the main connecting route by means of Routes 821 and 152 with the major inland Routes 82 and 15. Traffic moving inland would probably use Route 1A to make the connection.

Route 1A from Ha Tinh to Quang Khe is in good condition but does not appear to be as heavily used as the other segments. The only major crossings are at Tu Dong, which is still an unimproved highway ford, and the ferry at Ron. It is possible, by using Route 108 and Route 1082, to move inland to Route 82 and then down to Route 110 and Quang Khe, bypassing Ron.

The ferry on Route 1A at the coastal transshipment point of Quang Khe is active. However, the Route 110 ferry, located 2 nm west of Quang Khe, appears to be more heavily used. It is connected to Route 1A by a good road and the approaches to the ferry are being extensively improved. At Quang Khe, traffic can shift from Route 1A to Route 101 and then to Route 137, or continue down Route 101 to Dong Hoi and the routes to the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).

Route 1A from Quang Khe to Dong Hoi is in good condition and is in use. At Xom Phuong, 7 nm north of Dong Hoi, a typical culvert/causeway of the type utilized at most of the crossings is observed (Figure 5).

The ferries at Dong Hoi and Huu Hung enable traffic either to continue down Route 1A to the eastern DMZ routes (such as Route 102) or, by using Route 101, to connect with Routes 1036, 1032, 1039, and 103.

In addition to the improved bridge crossings on Route 1A, several areas of road improvement are also observed in areas of heavy bomb interdiction and in washed-out areas. The repairs consist of fill from the surrounding area being moved onto the right of way to form a good base and, in some cases, of wet earth being transported from adjacent fields (Figure 6). This forms a smooth hard surface when dry. These improvements indicate that the North Vietnamese consider Route 1A to be an important part of their over-all lines of communication.

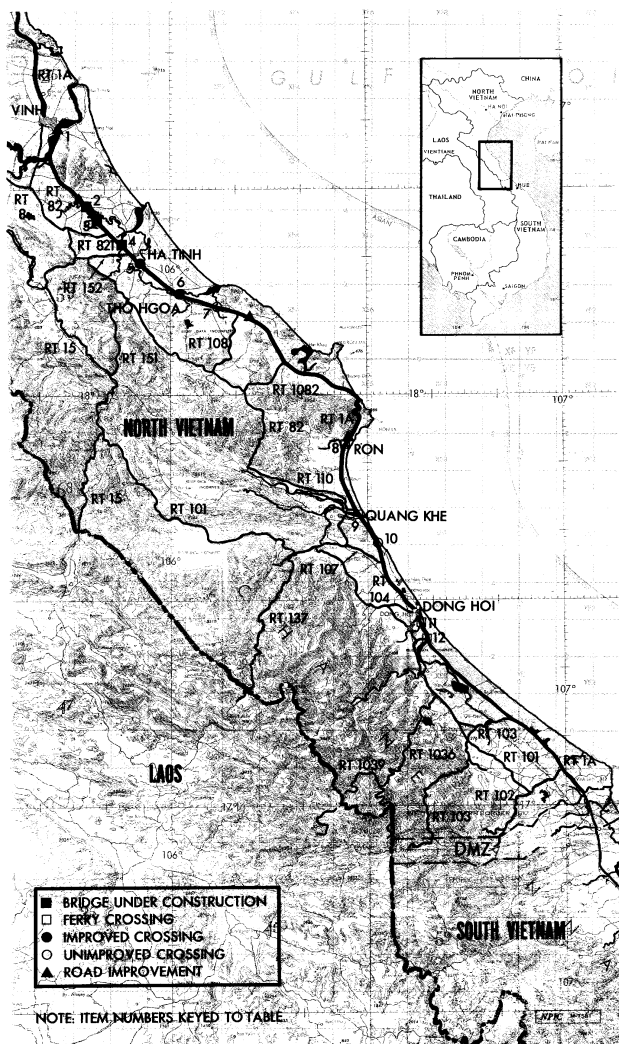
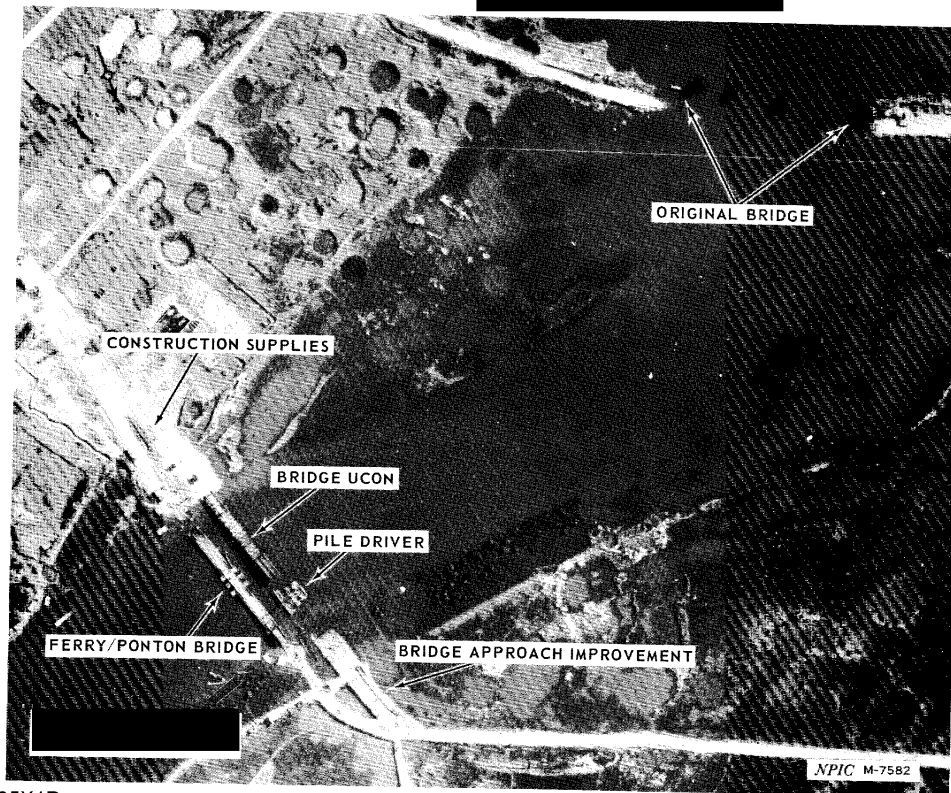


FIGURE 1. RIVER CROSSINGS, ROUTE 1A, NORTH VIETNAM

TABLE 1.
MAJOR RIVER CROSSINGS, ROUTE 1A

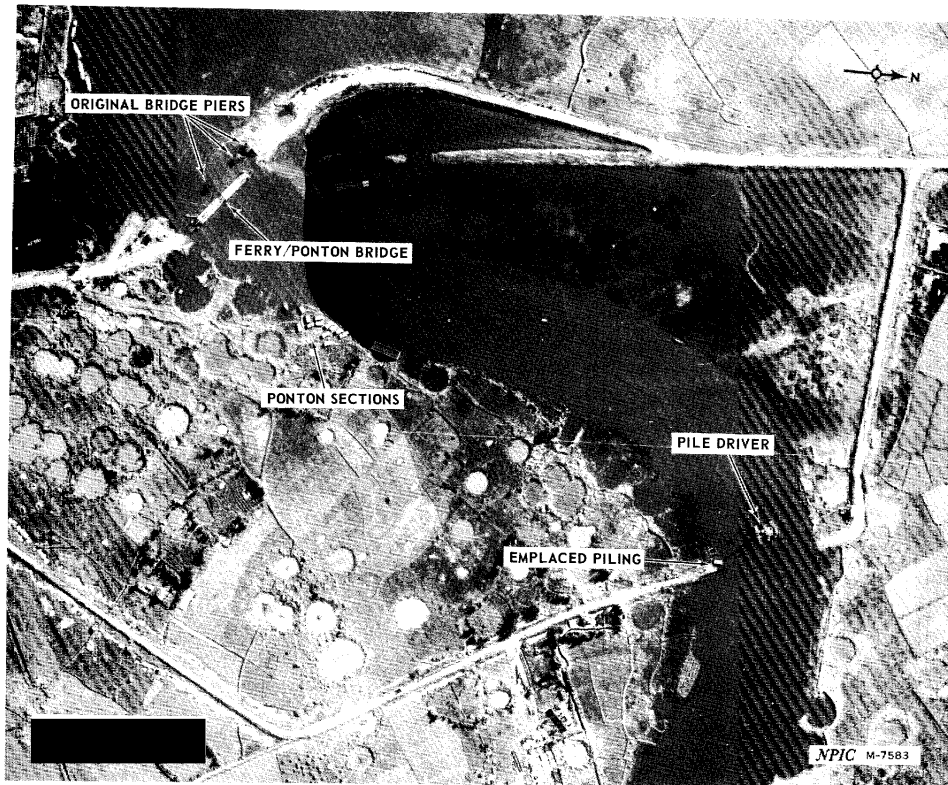
ITEM	TYPE	GEO COORDINATES	BE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
1	Vinh Highway Ferry over the Song Ca	183841N 1054234E		Ferry in operation.
2	Tho Son Highway Bridge over the Song Nhen	182722N 1054643E		Original bridge is destroyed. New bypass wooden deck bridge is being constructed. Ponton/ferry bridge is presently serviceable (Figure 2).
3	Xom Gia Highway Bridge over the Song Gia	182501N 1054830E		Original bridge is destroyed. Pile driver is at site preparing the footings for a new bypass bridge. Ponton/ferry bridge is presently serviceable (Figure 3).
4	Ha Tinh Highway Bridge over the Song Chau	182147N 1055222E		Original bridge destroyed. New bypass bridge being constructed is complete except for decking. Ferry is serviceable. Wooden decked bypass bridge is operational. No other bypasses observed (Figure 4).
5	Ha Tinh Highway Bridge over the Song Nai	181902N 1055459E		Original bridge destroyed. One completed wooden decked bypass bridge is operational. Ferry bridge removed.
6	Tho Ngoa Highway Bridge over stream	181420N 1060104E		Original bridge destroyed. Two bypass fords in use.
7	Tu Dung Highway Bridge over the Song Bac	181230N 1060710E		Ferry in operation. No other bypasses.
8	Ron Highway Ferry over the Song Ron	174237N 1062651E		Ferry in operation. One other ferry is operating on Route 110 crossing to the west which is connected to Route 1A by bypass route.
9	Quang Khe Highway Ferry on the Song Giang	174204N 1062853E		Original bridge destroyed. Bridge/causeway is serviceable. One bypass is unserviceable.
10	Thanh Yen Highway Bridge over the Rao Da	173811N 1063124E		Original bridge destroyed. Ferry in operation. No other bypasses.
11	Dong Hoi Highway Bridge over the Rao Le Ky	172727N 1063750E		Ferry in operation.
12	Huu Hung Highway Ferry over Kien Giang	172400E 1063852E		

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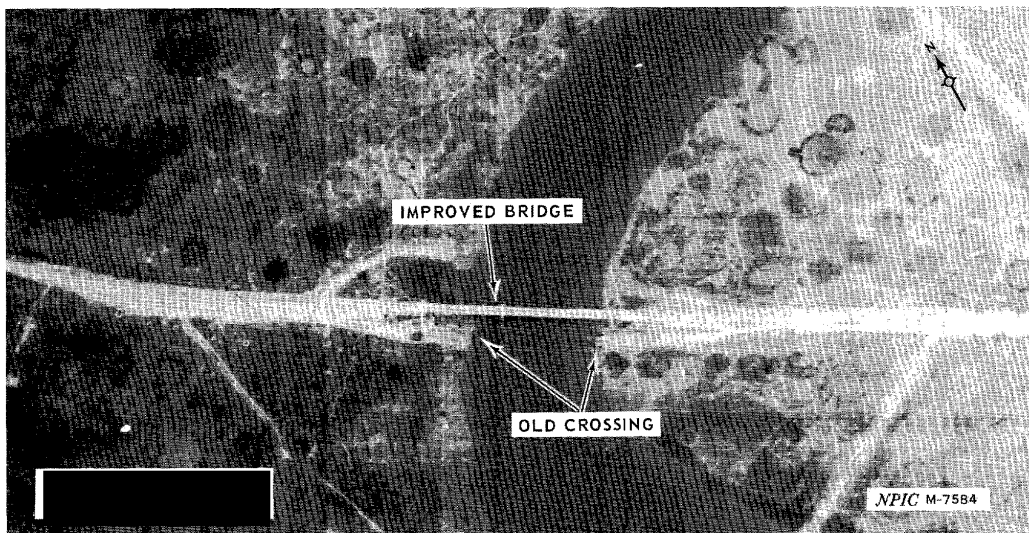
FIGURE 2. BRIDGE UNDER CONSTRUCTION, THO SON, NORTH VIETNAM



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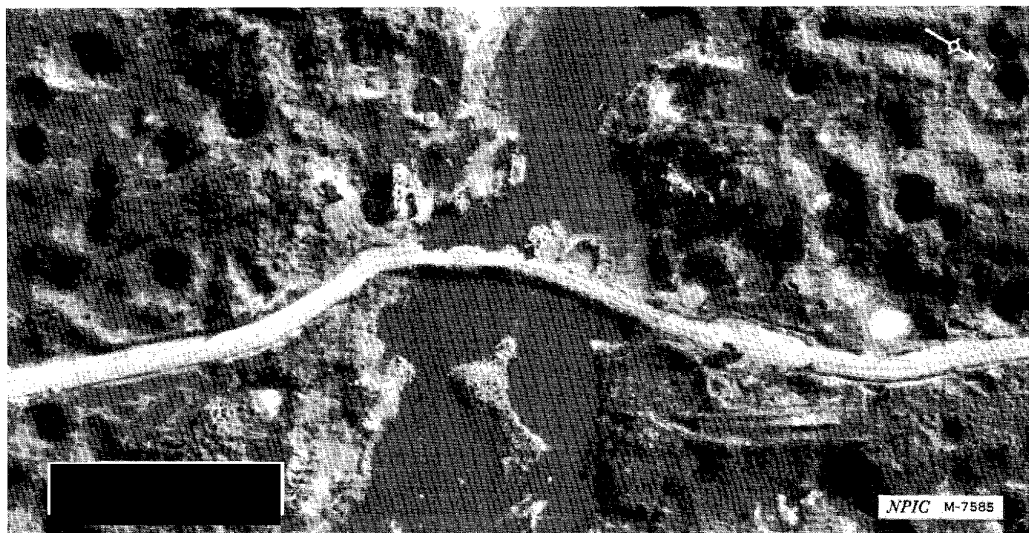
FIGURE 3. BRIDGE IMPROVEMENT, XOM GIA, NORTH VIETNAM

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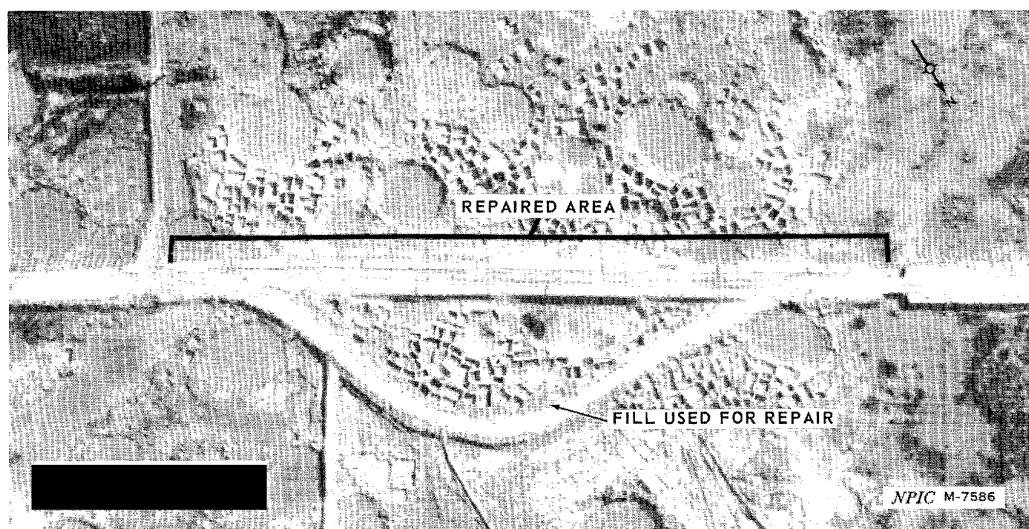
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FIGURE 4. IMPROVED RIVER CROSSING, HA TINH, NORTH VIETNAM



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FIGURE 5. CULVERT/CAUSEWAY-TYPE CROSSING, XOM PHOUNG, NORTH VIETNAM



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FIGURE 6. ROAD IMPROVEMENT, ROUTE 1A, NORTH VIETNAM

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